

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

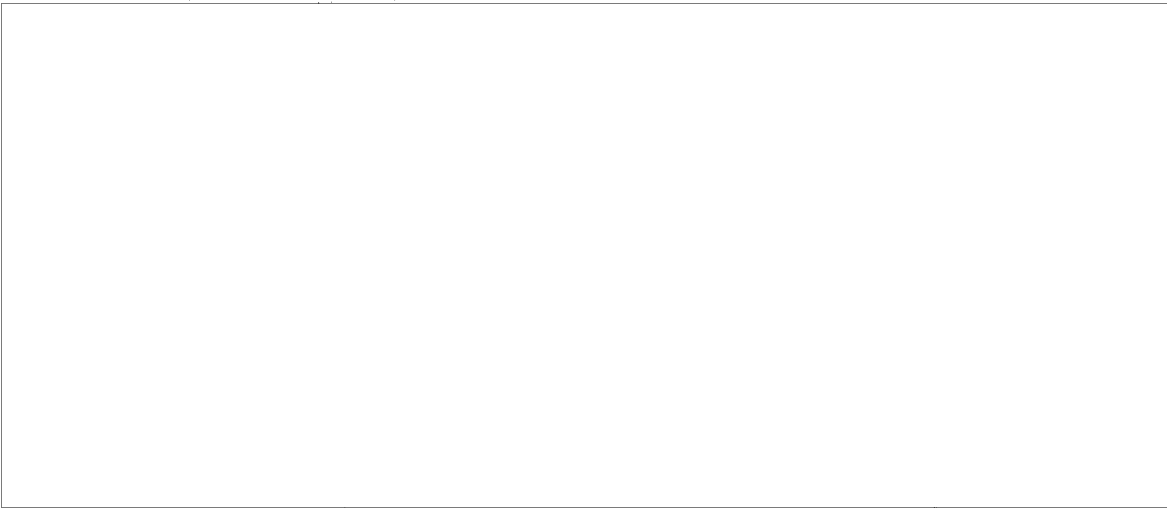
COUNTRY Poland
SUBJECT City of Bielsko-Biala

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1. Bielsko-Biala is the center of the Polish textile industry. There are about 120 or 130 textile mills located here which perform all steps in the processing, spinning and weaving of wool, cotton and linen. Because there were so many mills located in Bielsko, clothing was more plentiful than in other Polish cities. It was, however, expensive. A good, wool suit cost about 1200 - 1300 zlotys, the equivalent of the average factory worker's wages for two months.
2. The food situation was poor in Bielsko, but better than in most Polish cities. It was still necessary to stand in line for hours in order to purchase any item of food sold by the state shops. Most people preferred to buy from the farmers since they had a wider selection and their prices were slightly lower than the state stores. In June 1951, one kilo of butter cost 26 - 30 zlotys in state shops; most meat, about 12 zlotys per kilo; eggs, one zlotys each and milk, 1 1/2 zlotys a liter. [redacted] there was a one to two million zloty shortage in the funds of the government food shops. There was little black market activity because of the strict controls. Since 1950, the death penalty was imposed on anyone convicted of illegal traffic in foreign currency.
3. There were frequent shortages of water in the Bielsko-Biala district, which [redacted] were due to the increase of water consumption over the pre-war level. At noon on weekdays, there was hardly any water pressure throughout the city. [redacted] work was in progress to supply water from Porabka (4949N-1914E). [redacted] pipes lying along the road to this village.

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4. A critical housing shortage existed in the area, even though about 20 thousand factory workers did not live in the city and commuted from various surrounding villages. In July 1951, an order was issued by the city which fixed the number of square meters of living space for each inhabitant. A single person was permitted eight square meters; a woman with one child, 11 square meters; students also were allowed 11 square meters.

[The Points listed hereunder refer to overlay, City Plan of Bielsko-Biala, a copy of which is available at CIA Map Library.]

- Point #1 MAIN RAILWAY STATION. It was about 100 x 30 x 5 meters, of light brick, with a dark-red tile roof. There were about 12 tracks at the station. It handled passengers and freight, the latter consisting primarily of the products of the Bielsko textile mills.
- #2 BIALA RAILWAY STATION. This was a small, somewhat dilapidated station, 40 x 10 x 5, of light brick, with a dark-red tile roof. There were about five tracks at the station.
- #3 BIALA-LIPNIK STATION. A wooden shed about five by five meters with a low-pitched, gable-type, wooden roof. This station was used primarily by factory workers.
- #4 STARE BIELSKO RAILWAY STATION. This was the same sort of building as described in point #3. It was used by suburban dwellers travelling to and from the city.
- #5 TOWN HALL. A long "U" shaped building facing southeast, of red brick with a red tile roof. It was about 70 m in the front; the wings were about eight meters wide. It was used for city administrative offices.
- #6 CITY COMMUNIST PARTY HEADQUARTERS. A four story building, about 30 x 20 x 25 m, built of brick and plastered gray. It had a flat roof and housed various Communist Party offices, including those of the press, housing and agriculture.
- #7 DISTRICT COMMUNIST HEADQUARTERS. It was a former factory-owner's house, built in "baronial" style, about 20 x 15 x 20, two-stories, of brick covered with white plaster. There was a tower in the center of the building.
- #8 BUILDING OF THE "UB" (Urząd Bezpieczeństwa). A house occupied by the Polish Secret Police; brick, covered with white plaster, about 25 x 15 m; it had two stories. It had a red tile, gable-type roof. It contained offices and what were commonly called "interrogation cellars".
- #9 CIVIL POLICE HEADQUARTERS. A brick building covered with white plaster, about 30 x 15 x 15 m. Its cellars contained cells for the contemporary detention of civil offenders.
- #10 BIALA POLICE HEADQUARTERS. A former apartment house, about 30 x 20 x 12 m, with a flat roof. It was generally believed that there was considerable UB activity here.
- #10a OLD BIALA POLICE HEADQUARTERS. A brick building, covered with "dirty gray" plaster, about 25 x 10 x 9 m with a red tile, gable-type roof. Used as a civil police station.
- #11 BIELSKO MAIN FIRE STATION. A brick building, covered with gray plaster, with a red tile, gable-type roof. The first floor garaged 15 fire engines; they were Krup and Chevrolet-type engines.

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- #12 BIALA FIRE STATION. This building was of yellow brick, about 30 x 10 x 8 m, with a high-pitched, gable-type roof of red tile. In the spring of 1951, [] seven fire trucks here. 50X1
- #13 POST OFFICE. A triangular "flatiron-type" building; sides, about 50 m long; front, about 10 m across; brick, covered with cream-colored plaster; a red tile, gable-type roof; a small clock tower rose above the roof.
- #14 BIELSKO MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL. A unit made up of five two-story buildings situated in a park. These buildings were constructed of red brick, with red tile, gable-type roofs.
- #15 BIALA HOSPITAL. An "I" shaped building, about 120 m long, with end wings about 40 m long; two stories high; brick, covered with white plaster, with a red tile, gable-type roof. This was a general hospital. 50X1
- #16 ELECTRIC POWER STATION. The only power station in the city. [] two smokestacks about 30 m tall.
- #17 CITY GAS PLANT. With two large storage tanks. 50X1
- #18 ARTILLERY GARRISON. About 400 x 300 m housing the Jednostka Wojskowa No. 1063 Regiment. The buildings dated from the 1st World War. In May of 1951, 12 men [] built a small-arms range here on the southern edge of the garrison. The buildings were built of red brick, single story, except for the Hq building and the EM mess hall. This post was commanded by a Russian in Polish uniform. These officers were changed every three to four months; the last officer [] held the rank of Major. [] "medium-calibre", Soviet guns here. [] there were plans to renovate all the buildings in the garrison in the summer of 1951. Earlier, in February, March and April, [] Soviet vehicles in this garrison. 50X1
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- #19 FORMER INFANTRY GARRISON. Used to house young female apprentices who worked in various factories in Bielsko. It was rumored that this was a female political indoctrination center. However, the apprentices were to be moved out by the end of June 1951 and Soviet troops moved in. Renovation of the buildings and the construction of new buildings began in May of 1951. [] Soviet airmen were to come here. The buildings were brick, covered with cream-colored plaster, with gable-type roofs of red tile. [] people were being moved out of private dwellings in the area of this garrison to make room for incoming troops. 50X1
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- #20 "BISPOL" SCREW AND BOLT FACTORY. The largest factory of its kind in Poland, it was of pre-war construction, about 100 m long, one-story, red brick, with a sawtooth-type roof made of red tiles. [] this factory employed 3000 workers. It was supposed to have procured material from Silesia and to have exported a large part of this production to the satellites. 50X1
- #20a "BISPOL" SCREW AND BOLT FACTORY. Five buildings, all still under construction in June 1951. About 1/4 of the plant was in production when I left. The main production building was about 300 x 30 x 7 m, with interior supports in the form of brick columns. This building was built of reinforced concrete, with a low-pitched, gable-type roof of concrete. It had windows along its front, spaced at intervals of about 4 m.

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The plan was to move the majority of the workers from the other factory, (#20) into this plant. [] the director of this factory in March 1951 [] wore a Polish Army uniform. [] he held the rank of major.

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- #21 TEXTILE MACHINERY MANUFACTURING PLANT. Called Befama (Bielska Fabryka Maszyn) after 1949; formerly known as Josephy. A large, rectangular building about 150 m long, 100 m wide and three stories high. Built of light-colored, reinforced concrete; flat roof with skylights. [] it had about 2,000 employees. Under the German occupation it manufactured "pom-pom" type antiaircraft guns. [] it was to have a military director.

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- #22 PUMP FACTORY. Before the war it was called Schmeyer; about 1949, it was renamed for a Polish Communist. Brick building, covered with light-colored plaster.

- #23 ELECTRIC MOTOR FACTORY. Produced various sizes of electric motors. About 100 x 25 x 14 m; three stories. An old brick building covered with cream-colored plaster; a low-pitched, gable-type roof made of wood. Up to 1949, it was called Poslalaski.

- #24 BOX FACTORY. Called Meva, about 120 x 25 x 12 m; brick with reinforced concrete pillars; flat roof. [] that there were 200 - 300 employees.

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- #25 GOVERNMENT BREWERY. Called Beskit. A building about 70 x 30 x 15 m; brick, covered with cream-colored plaster; a red tile, gable-type roof.

- #26 GLIDER FACTORY. Warsztaty Szybowcowe. This factory was to move to Bielsko/Aleksandrowice airfield in August 1951. It was an old, wooden building about 50 x 20 x 4 m; wooden roof covered with tar paper. This was a combined testing and construction plant manufacturing and testing prototype gliders. Its director was (fnu) Tokarzewski, an ardent Communist. This factory had about 100 employees. It manufactured single-seat, and only occasionally, twin-place gliders.

- #27 BRICKYARD. About 70 m long and 25 m wide.

- #28 BRICKYARD. (See #27)

- #29 SAWMILL. About 60 x 30 x 12 m; brick. It produced lumber exclusively for construction purposes.

- #30 BRICKYARD. About 500 m north of the glider factory (#26).

- #31 UNUSED BRICKYARD.

- #32 BURNED-OUT FLOUR MILL. About 150 x 30 x 10 - 15 m.

- #33 HAT FACTORY. The largest hat factory in Poland. Called Bister. About 100 m long, 30 m wide and three stories high. Built of brick, covered with light plaster; flat, wooden roof with skylights.

- #33a HAT FACTORY. (See #33)

- #34 LINEN PROCESSING AND WEAVING PLANT. Called Lenko. About 100 x 30 x 10 m; red brick; black, sheet metal, gable-type roof. It employed about 500 people.

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- #35 TEXTILE MILL. About 70 x 30 x 14 m; brick, covered with white plaster; a gable-type roof covered with tar paper. It specialized in articles made of webbing.
- #36 SPINNING MILL. Called Trojkat W Kole. It made woolen thread and yarn. About 70 x 30 x 12 m; reinforced concrete; low-pitched, gable-type roof with skylights.
- #37 SPINNING MILL. Spun both woolen and cotton threads. About 70 x 30 x 8 m; brick covered with a light-colored plaster; wooden, gable-type roof covered with tar paper.
- #38 SPINNING MILL. Spun both woolen and cotton threads. About 50 x 20 x 8 meters; brick, covered with light-colored plaster; wooden, gable-type roof covered with tar paper.
- #39 SPINNING MILL. Spun woolen and cotton threads. About 50 m long, 25 m wide; two stories. Built of brick, covered with a light-colored plaster; wooden, gable-type roof covered with tar paper.
- #40 SPINNING MILL. Spun woolen and cotton threads. About 50 x 30 x 8 m; red brick; wooden, gable-type roof covered with tar paper.
- #41 STREETCAR TERMINAL. A "U" shaped building; the inside of the "U" was about 50 m, the arms about 20 m; red brick; roof was covered with tar paper. About 16 tracks led into the terminal.
- #42 CATHOLIC CEMETERY.
- #43 CATHOLIC CEMETERY.
- #44 PROTESTANT (LUTHERAN) CEMETERY.
- #45 PROTESTANT (LUTHERAN) CEMETERY.
- #46 SWIMMING POOL. About 50 x 30 m. A public pool with a pavillion and restaurant.
- #47 JEWISH CEMETERY.
- #48 PARK.
- #49 RIVER PARK.
- #50 LAKE. Swampy; it had water only in wet seasons. Clay was taken from here for the brickyards in the city.
- #51 WORKERS HOUSING PROJECT. Built in 1949; consisted of six to seven buildings of various sizes, all two stories. Each unit had two rooms, a kitchen and a very small bathroom. Brick, covered with cream-colored plaster; sheet metal roofs.
- #52 COMMUNIST YOUTH HOUSING PROJECT. Built in 1950; one building, about 100 x 30 - 40 m; two stories. Brick, covered with cream-colored plaster. It housed about 500 youths.
- #53 WORKERS HOUSING PROJECT. Still under construction in June 1951. About 30 houses of various sizes and shapes; red tile roofs.
- #54 (See point #52).

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- #55 WORKERS HOUSING PROJECT. Six houses of various sizes and shapes; two stories; red tile roofs. This project was still under construction in June 1951.
- #56 BUS TERMINAL. A square opposite the railroad terminal. Buses from Katowice and the south generally arrived and departed here.
- #57 NEW STREETCAR LINE. Supposed to have been completed 22 Jul 51. It was to follow Piastowska Street from the railroad station for about two kilometers. It had a loop at the end for return trips.
- #58 MARGARINE PROCESSING PLANT. About 50 m long, 30 m wide; one floor. Dark red brick; gable-type roof covered with tar paper.
- #59 MARGARINE PROCESSING PLANT. This plant was being rebuilt in June 1951. Called Polski Zaklady Tluszczoow. About 100 m long, 40 m wide; two floors. Brick; wooden roof covered with sheet metal.
- #60 MARKET PLACE. About 80 x 50 m, partially covered with cobblestones and cinders. A general market for farmers from the surrounding villages who came here on Wednesdays and Saturdays to sell their goods.
- #61 BIALA MARKET PLACE. About 200 x 100 m; covered with concrete. Farmers from surrounding villages brought their produce here.
- #62 ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH. The largest church in the area. Sandstone; had a tower about 35 m high.
- #63 LENIN STREET. The main street of the city; until March 1951, it was known as Ego Maja Street. About 12 m wide, surfaced with cobblestones. A streetcar line followed this street.
- #64 PIATOWSKA STREET. A new streetcar line, installed in the spring of 1951, followed this street. An important city bypass for trucks coming from Katowice going to Czechoslovakia. Surfaced with cobblestones and macadam.
- #65 MAIN ROAD TO KATOWICE AND WARSAW. About 10 m wide, was surfaced with cobblestones. Called Armii Czerwonej.
- #66 MAIN ROAD TO THE CZECH BORDER. About eight meters wide; surfaced with cobblestones. In excellent condition.
- #67 MAIN ROAD TO KRAKOW. Called Ilgo Listopada, surfaced with cobblestones, about eight meters wide.
- #68 ROAD TO ZYWIEC. Called Zywiecka, about eight meters wide, covered with cobblestones as far as the city limits; after this point, it was macadamized.
- #69 SHOPPING CENTER. Called Rynek. About 150 x 150 m, covered with crushed rock and bordered by various types of shops.
- #70 FREEDOM SQUARE. Called Plac Wolnosci. About 150 x 150 m. Used for political rallies.
- #71 SQUARE. Called Chrobry. The Bielsko center for political demonstrations; communist rallies and loudspeaker propaganda. About 90 x 90 m.

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- #72 SQUARE. Called Smolki. Triangular; about 100 x 50 x 120 m.
- #73 SQUARE. Called Zwirko and Wigura. Triangular; about 100 x 100 x 60 m; surfaced with cobblestones.
- #74 DŁUGA STREET. About six meters wide; covered with cobblestones.
- #75 KAZIMIERZA WIELKIEGO STREET. About six to seven meters wide; surfaced with cobblestones.
- #76 RZĘZNIĆZA STREET. About 10 m wide; surfaced with cinders. Named for a slaughterhouse located on the street.
- #77 MICKIEWICZA STREET. About eight meters wide; macadamized surface.
- #78 KRASINKIEGO STREET. About 11 m wide; surfaced with cobblestone.
- #79 SŁOWACKIEGO STREET. About 12 m wide; surfaced with cobblestone. It had a prison, a courthouse, schools and a public hall used for political rallies and dances.
- #80 SOBIESKIEGO STREET. About 10 m wide; surfaced with cobblestone. Lined with dwelling houses. The infantry garrison was here. (See point #19)
- #81 SQUARE. Called Plac Zwycięstwa. Covered an area about 2500 square meters; surfaced with uneven stones.
- #82 BIALKA RIVER. About 10 m wide. There was no possibility for navigation.
- #83 RAILROAD TO KATOWICE. Double-tracked. Carried heavy traffic. January 1951 that the Soviets were building a large railroad junction for military purposes leading from Dziedzice (4955N-1901E) into a forest which lay to the west south west. that another important new junction was to be built less than 10 km from Bielsko.
- #84 RAILROAD LINE TO KRAKOW. Single-track line, in good condition.
- #85 RAILROAD LINE TO CIESZYN. Single-track line, in good condition.
- #86 RAILROAD LINE TO ZYWIEC. Single-track line, in good condition. The line passed under the city for about 200 m.
- #87 MAIN FACTORY OF THE TEXTILE KOMBINAT MARIANA BUCZKA. One building, about 120 x 120 x 8 - 10 m. Red brick; saw-tooth type roof with skylights spaced along the serrations. About 300 people were employed here. Surrounded by a barbed wire fence, except in front, where it was protected by a wire mesh fence, both about three meters high.
- #88 SUBSIDIARY FACTORY OF THE KOMBINAT MARIANA BUCZKA. One gray-plastered, brick building; about 120 x 120 x 15 m, two floors; low-pitched gable-type roof covered with tar paper. About 400 people were employed here. Surrounded by a brick wall about five meters high.

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- #89 OTHER FACTORY OF THE KOMBINAT MARIANA BUCZKA. Believed to be another factory of the Kombinat. Two-story building, about 100 m long 20 m wide; red brick; low-pitched, gable-type roof, covered with tar paper.
- #90 WOOLEN MILL. About 100 - 200 m x 25 x 15 m. Brick, covered with gray plaster; reddish, sheet metal gable-type roof. About 300 people worked here.
- #91 RAILROAD BRIDGE. Simple, steel span on the line to Katowice. About 50 m long, 5 m wide and 6 m high.
- #92 VIADUCT OVER THE RAILROAD LINE TO CIESZYN. Reinforced concrete; about 20 m long, 12 m wide and 8 m high. There was a simple guard rail on both sides of the viaduct. All heavy traffic from Bielsko to Katowice had to pass over this viaduct.
- #93 RAILROAD BRIDGE OVER RIVER ON LINE TO KRAKOW. A simple, wooden bridge. Being reconstructed of heavy steel girders.
- #94 CONCRETE BRIDGE. A new structure built to replace the one destroyed by the Germans; opened on 1 May 51. About 20 m long, 12 m wide and 5 m above the water. A single span. Important because of its proximity to various factories and to the main railroad station.
- #95 CONCRETE BRIDGE. New bridge completed in the autumn of 1949. About 20 m long, 12 m wide and 5 m above the water.

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